

Remarks

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections and further examination are requested.

The specification and abstract have been reviewed and revised to make a number of editorial revisions thereto, including those required in the Office Action. A substitute specification and abstract including the revisions have been prepared and are submitted herewith. No new matter has been added. Also submitted herewith is a marked-up copy of the specification and abstract indicating the changes incorporated therein. As a result, withdrawal of the objections to the specification and abstract is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 4 have been objected to as containing a number of informalities. Claims 1 and 4 have been amended so as to address the objections thereto. As a result, withdrawal of the objections to the claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kawakami (JP 2002-231141). Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawasaki (US 6,924,795) in view of Kado (US 6,666,738) and Hirano (US 2003/0030377).

Claim 1 has been amended so as to further distinguish the present invention, as recited therein, from the references relied upon in the above-mentioned rejections. Further, claim 4 has been amended into independent form.

In addition, claims 1-5 have been amended to make a number of editorial revisions thereto. These revisions have been made to place the claims in better U.S. form. None of these amendments have been made to narrow the scope of protection of the claims, or to address issues related to patentability, and therefore, these amendments should not be construed as limiting the scope of equivalents of the claimed features offered by the Doctrine of Equivalents.

Claim 1 is patentable over Kawakami and the combination of Kawasaki, Kado and Hirano, since claim 1 recites a method of aging a plasma display panel including, in part, applying, after a predetermined time period from a rising time of a voltage having an alternating voltage component applied at least between a scan electrode and a sustain electrode, an erase discharge-suppressing voltage for suppressing an erase discharge that occurs after an aging discharge to at least one of the scan electrode, the sustain electrode, and a data electrode.

Kawakami and the combination of Kawasaki, Kado and Hirano fail to disclose or suggest this feature of claim 1.

Kawakami discloses an aging method for a plasma display panel having a common electrode x, a scan electrode y, and a data electrode a. The aging method includes a field discharge 30 and an opposite discharge 40. During the field discharge 30, an alternating voltage waveform is applied to both the common electrode x and the scan electrode y and a constant voltage is applied to the data electrode a. Then, during the opposite discharge 40, the alternating voltage is applied to the common electrode x and the scan electrode y and an alternating voltage that is 180° out of phase from the alternating voltage applied to the common electrode x and the scan electrode y is applied to the data electrode a. In this manner, aging is performed using the field discharge 30 for a first prescribed period of time and then using the opposite discharge 40 for a second prescribed period. (See Abstract; Description of Drawings; and Figure 1).

As discussed above, the field discharge 30 and the opposite discharge 40 are performed during separate time periods in the aging method of Kawakami. On the other hand, claim 1 recites that the erase discharge-suppressing voltage for suppressing an erase discharge that occurs after the aging discharge is applied after a predetermined period of time from a rising time of the voltage having the alternating voltage component applied at least between the scan electrode and the sustain electrode. Kawakami fails to disclose or suggest the application of an erase discharge-suppressing voltage after a predetermined time period from a rising time of a voltage having an alternating voltage component applied at least between the common electrode x and the scan electrode y. As a result, claim 1 is patentable over Kawakami.

Regarding the combination, Kawasaki discloses a driving method for a plasma display panel having a sustain electrode 11, a scan electrode 12, and an address electrode 21. The driving method includes applying alternating voltages to each of the sustain electrode 11, the scan electrode 12, and the address electrode 21. The alternating voltages applied to the sustain electrode 11 and the scan electrode 12 are 180° out of phase from each other and such that there is no point when both of the alternating voltages are high. Further, the alternating voltage applied to the address electrode 21 rises with the fall of the alternating voltage applied to the scan electrode 12 and falls with the fall of the alternating voltage applied to the sustain electrode 11. (See column 10, lines 19-36 and Figures 6(A)-6(D)).

In the rejection, one of the alternating voltages applied to the sustain electrode 11, the scan electrode 12, and the address electrode 21 is relied upon as corresponding to the claimed erase discharge-suppressing voltage. However, it is apparent that none of the alternating voltages of Kawasaki are applied, after a predetermined time period from a rising time of a voltage having an alternating voltage component applied at least between the scan electrode 12 and the sustain electrode 11, for suppressing an erase discharge that occurs after an aging discharge. Therefore, Kado and/or Hirano must disclose or suggest this feature in order for the combination to render claim 1 obvious.

As for Kado and Hirano, these references are relied upon in the rejection as supporting the position that the driving method of Kawasaki, discussed above, which is used during the normal operation of the plasma display panel can also be used during an aging of the plasma display panel. However, it is apparent that neither of these references cures the deficiency of Kawasaki as set forth above. As a result, the combination of Kawasaki, Kado and Hirano fails to render claim 1 obvious.

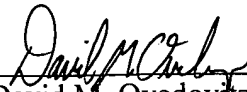
As for claim 4, it is patentable over the references relied upon in the rejections for reasons similar to those set forth above in support of claim 1. That is, claim 4 recites, in part, applying a voltage for suppressing an erase discharge that occurs after the aging discharge to the data electrode, wherein the voltage for suppressing the erase discharge is higher at an aging-discharge generating moment when the aging discharge occurs than at an erase-discharge generating moment when the erase discharge occurs after the aging discharge. None of the references, either alone or in combination, discloses or suggests applying a voltage to a data electrode as is recited in claim 4.

Because of the above-mentioned distinctions, it is believed clear that claims 1-5 are allowable over the references relied upon in the rejections. Furthermore, it is submitted that the distinctions are such that a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention would not have been motivated to make any combination of the references of record in such a manner as to result in, or otherwise render obvious, the present invention as recited in claims 1-5. Therefore, it is submitted that claims 1-5 are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that there are issues remaining which must be resolved before allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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